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FM (b)(3):10 USC 424
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SUBJ: THIS IS IR (b)(3):10 USC 424
1. ARGENTINA (AR)
2. (b)(3):10 USC 424
3. MILITARY AFFAIRS - ARA ACTION AGAINST FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS
4. N/A
5. 771003
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7. 771003, BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA
8. INITIATIVE
9. (b)(3):10 USC 424
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REC'D DS-4B 6 OCT '77

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13. (b)(3):10 USC 424

14.

15. DIRC: NO. ~~NOFORN TO AVOID EMBARRASSMENT TO HOST GOVERNMENT.~~

16. SUMMARY: 1. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ ARGENTINE NAVY CONTINUES TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS WHICH THEY CLAIM ARE VIOLATING ARGENTINE NATIONAL TERRITORY BY FISHING WITHIN 200 NAUTICAL MILES OF ARGENTINE COAST.

22. DETAILS: 1. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ AS REPORTED IN IR (b)(3):10 USC 424 FOUR RUSSIAN FISHING SHIPS WERE RECENTLY CAPTURED AND TAKEN TO PORT. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE ARA DESTROYER ROSALES CAPTURED A FIFTH RUSSIAN SHIP, A FISH PROCESSING AND TRANSPORT ("FACTORY") SHIP, CALLED NEREY. ALL SHIPS WERE TAKEN TO PUERTO MADRYN (COORDINATES: 42468 - 6503W) TO AWAIT ASSESSMENT OF FINES AND CONFISCATION OF FISH THAT WAS FOUND ABOARD. FINES WILL BE ASSESSED BY THE ARGENTINE PREFECTURA (COAST GUARD) AND COULD RUN AS HIGH AS 100,000 US$ PER SHIP. SOURCE A, Sec. 3.3(b) (1) STATED THAT THERE WERE AS MANY AS 12 TO 16 FISHING SHIPS LOCATED WITHIN ARGENTINE WATERS BUT MANY OF THEM ESCAPED. HE STATED THAT SOME OF THE SHIPS WERE FIRST SEEN ABOUT 80NM FROM THE ARGENTINA COASTLINE. ARGENTINA CLAIMS 200NM AS THEIR TERRITORIAL LIMIT. THE OTHER SHIPS CAPTURED INITIALLY (BESIDES THE FACTORY SHIP) ARE: BUSSOL, TEODOR NETTE, APATIT, MAGNIT. (TEODOR NETTE AND MAGNIT WERE MISSPELLED IN ORIGINAL REPORT.)

2. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ ON 1 OCT THE ARGENTINE NAVY AGAIN TOOK AGGRESSIVE ACTION TO CAPTURE MORE FOREIGN VESSELS IN ARGENTINE WATERS. AT LEAST ONE BULGARIAN SAILOR WAS WOUNDED WHEN ARGENTINE NAVY SHIPS FIRED UPON AND HIT TWO BULGARIAN FISHING TRAWLERS. THE PREVIOUS CAPTURE OF FIVE SOVIET FISHING TRAWLERS DID NOT APPEAR TO INTIMIDATE THE FOREIGN FISHING FLEET AND LATE ON 1 OCT FOUR MORE VESSELS WERE CAPTURED AND UNDER ESCORT TO PUERTO MADRYN. THEY ARE: AURELIA (BULGARIAN), OFELIA (BULGARIAN), PROKOPYEVSKI (RUSSIAN), AND FRANZ HALS (RUSSIAN).

3. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE HEAD OF THE NAVY'S PUBLIC INFORMATION DEPARTMENT SAID THAT THE CINC ARA, ADM MASSERA, HAD PERSONALLY SUPERVISED THE CAPTURE. HIS ORDERS TO THE ON-SCENE COMMANDER, ADM JORGE ANAYA, CDR NAVAL FORCES, WAS "IF NECESSARY, ACTION IS TO BE TAKEN AGAINST THE FOREIGN VESSELS TO THE ULTIMATE CONSEQUENCES TO DEFEND NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY".

4. ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE ARGENTINE NAVY SHIPS FIRED UPON AND HIT THE "AURELIA" AND OFELIA WHICH WERE LOCATED ABOUT 90NM FROM COMODORO RIVADAVIA. WHEN THE CO OF THE ARA DESTROYER PIEDRA BUENA ORDERED THE BULGARIAN SHIP "AURELIA" TO GIVE ITSELF UP, THE BULGARIAN SHIP SPED AT FULL SPEED TOWARDS INTERNATIONAL WATERS. THREE SHOTS WERE FIRED UPON THE "QURELIA" BEFORE IT SURRENDERED TO THE ARGENTINE

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NAVY. THE CAPTURE OF THE OFELIA TOOK PLACE UNDER SIMILAR CIRCUM-
STANCES. UNFORTUNATELY, THREE ARGENTINE PETTY OFFICERS PERISHED IN
THE EARLY MORNING HOURS OF 1 OCTOBER. THEY WERE IN A LAUNCH WHICH
CAPSIZED WHILE TRYING TO MAKE ITS WAY TO ONE OF THE RUSSIAN TRAWLERS.
SOME REPORTS ACCUSE THE FISHING SHIPS OF FAILING TO PARTICIPATE IN
THE SEARCH FOR THE THREE MISSING SAILORS AND, IN FACT, OF TAKING
ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION BY TRYING TO ESCAPE DURING THE SEARCH
OPERATION. AT THIS MOMENT THE CAPTURED SHIPS ARE AWAITING
FINAL ACTION BY THE ARA.

(b)(3):10 USC 424

COMMENT: ~~(C/NOFORN)~~ THE ARA HAS AN INADEQUATE PATROL FORCE TO
SURVEIL THEIR CLAIMED 200NM TERRORITORAL WATERS. SOURCE B STATED
THE RUSSIANS KNOW THIS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION BY
GOING CLOSE TO THE ARGENTINE COAST WHERE THERE IS AN ABUNDANCE OF
FISH. SOURCE A STATED THAT AN ARA P2 WHO HAPPENED TO BE ON PATROL
(AFTER HAVING BEEN TIPPED OFF BY LOCAL FISHERMEN) WAS THE FIRST TO
SPOT THE ALLEGED VIOLATION. WITH A TOTAL OF FIVE P2 NAVY PATROL
AIRCRAFT, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR THE ARA TO PROTECT ITS CLAIMED WATERS.
DESPITE THESE DISADVANTAGES, THESE NAVAL ACTIVITIES COMBINE TO EN-
HANCE THE REPUTATION OF THE POLITICALLY AMBITIOUS CINC OF THE NAVY,
ADMIRAL MASSERA. IN TAKING ON THE RUSSIANS HE BECOMES SOMETHING OF
A NATIONAL HERO. RUSSIAN REACTION AT PRESENT HAS BEEN LOW. PHOTO-
GRAPHS WILL BE FORWARDED BY SEPARATE LETTER. THIS MSG COORD W/EMBASSY.
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